

American

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President Obama's Call to President Bachelet of Chile on the Earthquake

President extends condolences, repeats U.S. offer of assistance

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

February 27, 2010

Readout of President Obama's call with President Michelle Bachelet of Chile

This afternoon, President Obama spoke with President Michelle Bachelet to express his condolences for the losses Chile suffered as a result of this morning's tragic earthquake. The President commended President Bachelet for the Chilean government's response to the disaster and recognized Chile's capacity and expertise in responding to earthquakes. He reiterated that the United States stands ready to assist the Chilean government's rescue and recovery efforts. President Bachelet thanked President Obama for his call, and said that she would be in touch should Chile require any support.

Secretary Clinton Delivering Communications Equipment to Chile

By Stephen Kaufman
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is bringing communications equipment, including satellite phones, to Chile to help the country recover from a massive earthquake that struck February 27, and she said U.S. search-and-rescue teams are on stand-by in case they are needed and more technical assistance is on the way.

In remarks with Uruguayan President-elect José Mujica in Montevideo March 1, Clinton's first stop on a five-day visit to South America, the secretary said she will meet with Chile's president, Michelle Bachelet, and President-elect Sebastian Piñera in Santiago March 2 to "work with the government and people of Chile in solidarity in recovery from this earthquake."

Clinton's visit to Chile had been scheduled before the 8.8-magnitude quake. According to press reports, the death toll stands at more than 700 as of March 1, and is expected to rise.

Clinton said both she and President Obama had spoken to Bachelet shortly after the earthquake occurred to express condolences and offer assistance. The secretary said U.S. search-and-rescue teams and other potential assets were put on stand-by.

"They have asked for communications equipment, some

of which I am bringing on our plane. Other technical equipment will be flown there in addition. But one of the reasons why they have asked me to continue my trip is to assess whatever else they might need and immediately to begin the process of providing it," Clinton said.

Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs P.J. Crowley told reporters in Washington March 1 that Clinton will be bringing satellite phones and imagery that may help Chilean authorities assess the damage and determine how best to respond to it. Along with communications support, he said, the Chilean government has requested U.S. assistance in providing a field hospital and water-purification systems.

"We are mobilizing those capabilities as we speak, and we'll be moving those down to Chile as quickly as possible," Crowley said. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is determining whether the assistance would best be obtained from a private source or military source.

The field hospital is being tailored "to make sure that it is to address the injuries that we think the Chilean people have suffered, and that it would be best for those medical professionals ... to be able to address," Crowley said.

While the earthquake in Chile was much stronger than the January 12 quake in Haiti, which measured 7.0, press reports have said the smaller death toll and level of destruction in Chile can be explained by the epicenter's location under the sea floor and away from major population centers, as well as Chile's own earthquake preparations and resources.

In 1960, Chile endured a 9.5-magnitude quake that killed 2,000 people. Crowley said that and other experiences have helped Chileans prepare for and respond to the February 27 disaster.

"Their building standards were strengthened over the past decades, and so ... I think you have a population that clearly was very well prepared, which I think accounts for the relatively low ... death toll at this point," Crowley said.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) estimated February 28 that 500,000 homes, particularly adobe structures used by indigenous people, were severely damaged. In addition to the deaths caused by the quake itself, PAHO said the tsunami it triggered is estimated to have killed hundreds who were living in coastal cities such as Concepción and Constitución.

Several private U.S. and international relief organizations are sending personnel and relief assistance to Chile. Many are also setting up text-message donation services, similar

to those established to help Haiti that have raised more than \$40 million from private donors.

Secretary Clinton Praises Uruguayan Transition of Power

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.
Staff Writer

Washington — Uruguayans should be proud of their national leaders and their democracy in the peaceful transition of power following national elections in November 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton says.

Clinton paid tribute to new President José Mujica and his government in a meeting March 1 in Montevideo at his inauguration and also praised the government for the way in which it was successful in bringing together various political parties and groups to work for the nation. Mujica took the oath of office at Uruguay's Legislative Palace.

"Your country, President Mujica, is a model for many others not only in our hemisphere, but throughout the world," she said. "We join in celebrating the strength of Uruguayan democracy and the progress that your country has made and we know will continue to make in the future."

Clinton also praised Uruguay for its contributions to U.N. peacekeeping missions and the leadership role it has played in chairing the Friends of Haiti group.

Mujica praised the success of President Obama in becoming the first African-American president of the United States. He also sought to move the relationship between the United States and Uruguay ahead.

"We already have some commercial agreements, but we want to move forward," he said. "We want your cooperation in science, especially in research."

Clinton said the Obama administration also seeks to expand its relationship with Uruguay.

"As you and I discussed, sir, we will be working with you in partnership on behalf of education, science and technology, business, trade and investment," Clinton said at a press briefing.

Democratically elected governments throughout the Western Hemisphere are a significant theme during Clinton's six-nation visit to Latin America. She meets with newly elected presidents in Uruguay, Chile and Costa Rica during her stops.

In addition to Uruguay, Clinton will make visits to

Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Costa Rica and Guatemala.

CLINTON AND KIRCHNER

Clinton travels later March 1 to Buenos Aires for consultations with Argentine President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. The meeting was added to her schedule after Clinton began her trip to the region February 28.

Reporters asked Clinton if the United States would assist Argentina and Britain with a dispute over the British-administered Falkland Islands in the south Atlantic, which are called the Malvinas and claimed by Argentina. Britain and Argentina fought a military action over the islands in 1982.

"It is our position that this is a matter to be resolved between the United Kingdom and Argentina," Clinton told reporters. "If we can be of any help in facilitating such an effort, we stand ready to do so."

CHILEAN ASSISTANCE

The United States is sending advanced communications equipment to earthquake-stricken Chile at the government's request, and has also put on stand-by advanced urban search-and-rescue teams and other assets that may be required, Clinton said. The search-and-rescue teams, which are affiliated with local fire departments in the United States, were sent to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, following the devastating earthquake there.

Chile was struck by a magnitude 8.8 earthquake February 27 that has killed hundreds and left many more homeless.

"I will be in Santiago tomorrow [March 2] to meet with President [Michelle] Bachelet and President-elect [Sebastian] Piñera to work with the government and the people of Chile in solidarity in recovery from this earthquake," Clinton said at her press briefing in Montevideo. "They have asked for communications equipment, some of which I am bringing on our plane. Other equipment will be flown there in addition."

"One of the reasons why they have asked me to continue my trip is to assess whatever else they might need and immediately to begin the process of providing it," Clinton added.

In Brazil, Clinton will meet with President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva and Foreign Minister Celso Luiz Nunes Amorim in Brasilia, and in Sao Paulo she will hold a town hall meeting with university students.

Clinton will participate in a meeting on the Pathways to Prosperity in the Americas initiative in San Jose, Costa

Rica, March 3–4. The initiative, which was begun in 2008, is designed to link Western Hemisphere countries that are committed to democracy and open markets in an initiative to promote inclusive growth, prosperity and social justice. It is designed to help countries learn from one another's experience through the exchange of methods to spread the benefits of economic growth.

On the final day of her trip in Guatemala, Clinton will hold meetings with Guatemalan President Álvaro Colom, and with Presidents Porfirio Lobo of Honduras, Mauricio Funes of El Salvador, Oscar Arias of Costa Rica and Leonel Fernandez of the Dominican Republic.

Secretary Clinton on Winners of 2010 International Women of Courage Award

Secretary Clinton pays tribute to outstanding women leaders worldwide

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
March 1, 2010

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

Secretary Clinton Announces the Winners of the Secretary's 2010 International Women of Courage Award

Secretary Clinton today announced the 10 winners of this year's International Women of Courage (IWOC) award. On March 10, Secretary Clinton will present the awards to the honorees at the Department of State.

The awardees are: Shukria Asil (Afghanistan), Col. Shafiqah Quraishi (Afghanistan), Androula Henriques (Cyprus), Sonia Pierre (Dominican Republic), Shadi Sadr (Iran), Ann Njogu (Kenya), Dr. Lee Ae-ran (Republic of Korea), Jansila Majeed (Sri Lanka), Sister Marie Claude Naddaf (Syria), and Jestina Mukoko (Zimbabwe).

The annual International Women of Courage Award was started in March 2007 to recognize women around the globe who have shown exceptional courage and leadership in advocating for women's rights and advancement. This is the only award within the Department of State that pays tribute to outstanding women leaders worldwide. It recognizes the courage and leadership shown as they struggle for social justice and human rights.

"These ten women have overcome personal adversity, threats, arrest, and assault to dedicate themselves to activism for human rights," said Melanne Verbeke, the State Department's first ever Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues. "From striving to give more voice to politically underrepresented women in Afghanistan to documenting human rights abuses in Zimbabwe, these

heroic individuals have made it their life's work to increase freedom and equality in the world."

The International Women of Courage Awards will be open to the press. Additional details will be forthcoming.

Award recipients will be in Washington and available for interviews from March 7–12.

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